

Assessment Report

Investors in People Gold assessment report for Alliance Learning

Undertaken by
Michael Lynch – Specialist

On behalf of Investors in People North of England

Project Number: 16/1258

Date: 6th May 2016

Accreditation Date	18-month interaction due	Accreditation Expiry Date
6 th May 2016	November 2017	5 th May 2019

Commercial in Confidence

Introduction

Their previous Investors in People assessment took place on the 20th & 21st April 2016. 21 people were interviewed from a staff population of 73 which represented 29% which was in line with the recommended sample band of 20% – 35% as outlined by UKCES. One Specialist was involved during the accreditation visit.

The following visit will take place on 6th May 2016 and a further 8 staff were interviewed in order to build upon the comprehensive assessment evidence found on the first visit in April 2016

Objectives for the Assessment

- Examine the organisations current position against the international IIP Standard in line with its aims and future priorities
- Establish whether the organisation meets the requisite 165 evidence requirements for them to achieve the Investors in People Gold Standard.
- Provide qualitative feedback to senior management
- Develop a continuous improvement plan (CIP) which will assist to take the organisation forward

Accreditation review – Outcome

Having carried out the accreditation process in accordance with the guidelines provided for Specialists by UK Commission for Employment and Skills, the Specialist was satisfied beyond any doubt that Alliance Learning continued to meet the requirements of the international Investors in People Standard. On behalf of Investors in People North of England the Specialist would like to congratulate Alliance Learning on this achievement.

Gold Award

The Specialist also confirmed that Alliance Learning had met a total of 180* evidence requirements (* 39 plus 141 evidence requirements above the Investors in People Standard) and this equated to a Gold award requiring at least a total of 165 evidence requirements. On behalf of Investors in People North of England the Specialist would like to congratulate Alliance Learning on this additional achievement.

Michael Lynch BA (Hon) Cert.Ed. CMC MIC FIC
Senior Associate and Investors in People Specialist
6th May 2016

Additional prologue

This assessment took place at a time where there had been several changes to the business and some restructuring had taken place.

The client should be commended for embarking on such a complex assessment which covered a cornucopia of evidence requirements and would involve a focus not only on the support for learning & development for staff but also the approach to people management strategies,

During the assessment and having visited Alliance Learning on several occasions the Specialist witnessed an upward trajectory in terms of:

- Efficacious leadership
- Role alignment
- Commitment to developing people
- Overall change management
- Communication effectiveness

Although senior management should be pleased for the result and also that people were happy with the overall, working environment, they should also reflect on the part that they have played in leading Alliance Learning through significant challenges.

The Specialist would like to take this opportunity in highlighting the fact that people view senior management as exceptional in terms of:

- Leadership styles
- Building trust
- Openness & honesty
- Approachability
- Communication
- Guidance where & when needed
- Vision and ambition
- Transformation approach
- Compassion where needed
- Direction
- Taking the business forward

Although the above could be viewed as an inanimate list, during the assessment, the Specialist was privileged to experience these words 'come to life' during descriptions by all members of staff interviewed at Alliance Learning. The actual praise for senior management was totally unsolicited and positive in its delivery by members of various teams at the company.

There was no doubt that everyone owns the success of the company and the IIP Gold award but senior management should take credit for their exemplary people management skills and overall leadership at Alliance Learning.

The Specialist would like to wish everyone at Alliance Learning all the best for the future and has no doubt that the business was being taken forward in a totally professional and committed way by senior management.

It was a pleasure to carry out the assessment and also to have the opportunity to meet such committed, passionate and dedicated people.

Executive Summary

Areas of strengths. – What makes Alliance Learning special and worthy of Gold IIP accreditation?

	Particular area identified during the visit	Link to high performance working
1	<p><u>Effective, dynamic & inspirational leadership & management.</u> There was no doubting the genuine, proactive and cogent approach to leadership & management which was displayed by top management & managers at Alliance Learning. The Specialist was provided with several positive comments in relation to how inspirational senior management were and how well that they had supported people over the years. <i>'She has a different way of management and it has worked'. 'She is a good leader but I don't know how she does it'. 'She is a people person and that comes across well to everyone'. 'They keep us updated and if there are any changes they tell the staff'. 'They do feel that staff need to know things'. 'She is brilliant'. 'She is ace, very motivational and very passionate'. 'She is always enthusiastic'. 'My impressions are that everyone is fairly positive and that they are all working towards the goal and not expecting us to do all the work'. 'They are taking us forward very well'. 'They are very good and look out for the business and the staff'. 'They always want to develop the staff and we get put forward for awards as a business'. 'They like to promote from within'. 'They have more interest in the people that work here than I have seen before; they care about you'. 'She can be strict but is down to earth'. 'I think that they do a good job and that they are well respected for it'.</i></p>	Effective leadership
2	<p><u>Self-esteem, job satisfaction & enthusiasm.</u> People indicated to the Specialist that they had very high job satisfaction and really enjoyed working at Alliance Learning. <i>'I do enjoy my role'. 'I like it when things go to plan'. 'I feel that I can really sell the company'. 'The people are really friendly and we are like one big family; I love it'. 'I wouldn't do the job if I wasn't happy'. 'It is a great place to work'. 'I quite like the job and you do get dedicated to the learners as well'. 'I am passionate about the business and it is rewarding working with young people'. 'Working with good people helps'. 'You are set a challenge and you want to do it'. 'It is the way that you are treated and there is help and support'. 'It is a really big company and we seem to be developing a lot of things which is great'. 'The people that work here make it so good'. 'You get praise off your managers and off the staff that you work with'. 'The quarterly awards are very good and we have social events'. 'They can see things in individuals'. 'I feel like I am listened to and things are taken on board'. 'Everyone is very welcoming and they trained me'. 'The get everyone involved in everything'. 'We have meetings every quarter and you are told about what we have achieved and what has happened since the last quarter'. 'I have always loved working here'.</i></p>	Positive working relationships within and across teams

3	<p><u>Knowledge of contributions to the success of the company.</u> People at Alliance Learning confirmed that they were well aware of how their various roles assisted in the overall success of the business. <i>'To make sure that we are functioning safely and efficiency'. 'If I can help a department to stop duplication then that makes me feel good'. 'Making sure that the money is rolling in'. 'My main focus is getting people onto qualifications that matter to learners'. 'I feel that I give good IAG to learners'. 'Meeting my targets'. 'The big thing is helping the learners'. 'When you see people come out the other side that is rewarding'. 'The tutors are all passionate about what they do and we get good feedback from the learners'. 'My contribution is to try your best to get apprentices as many jobs as you can'. 'I want to be achieving and meet my targets for the company and then we are all happy'. 'There is a clear vision on what we are trying to achieve'. 'To pass on your knowledge to the learners is important'. 'It is about bringing the business in and helping it grow'. 'Making sure we are complaint and doing things the right way'. 'Ensuring teaching and learning is the best that it can be so that employers come back'.</i></p>	Team focus & synergy
4	<p><u>Empowerment.</u> People outlined to the Specialists that they were allowed to use their considerable skills at Alliance Learning to get on with their job without being 'micro managed' or feeling that they were over supervised in any way. <i>'I feel more and more empowered'. 'She does ask my opinion and takes things on board'. 'I would say that I am trusted'. 'The level of work that they have given me recently lets me learn other job roles'. 'My manager trusts my professionalism'. 'Well they let me get on with it and make my appointments'. 'I am trustworthy, reliable and keep to times'. 'It is about being empowered by your manager that keeps you motivated'. 'You are kind of left to get on with it and have catch up meetings with your manager'. 'I am definitely empowered by my managers'.</i></p>	Trust and enablement
5	<p><u>Teamwork.</u> There was very good evidence of good synergy and corporate ownership at Alliance Learning and this can only auger well for their clients & the future of the business. People who worked at Alliance Learning confirmed to the Specialist that teamwork was vital to the operation and also that flexibility of roles was also key to ensuring consistent delivery of teaching & learning. <i>'We work as a family'. 'Everyone worked together on the open evening'. 'We have daily huddles with the team leader'. 'You have to work as a team here'. 'Absolutely class one; they are an excellent team with a good mix of knowledge as well'. 'We are like one big family and I have never seen that before'. 'We all get on'. 'If somebody leaves we all muck in'. 'We are very strong in relation to teamwork'. 'We have get-togethers and everyone knows what's going on in the business'. 'We have a nice set of people and everybody gets on'. 'I love the people and everyone is so welcoming'.</i></p>	Whole team focus

6	<p><u>Overall learning & Development support.</u> There can be no doubting the high levels of developmental support offered to the staff at Alliance Learning. Several very positive comments were made about the training and ongoing support that was available. <i>'Fantastic, everything I have asked for I have been given'. 'Definitely we have our yearly appraisals and training gets addressed'. 'They have put me through several training courses'. 'We have regular CPD'. 'If anyone has suggestions for training, it is always taken on-board'. 'I have done a couple of qualifications whilst I have been here'. 'They are brilliant with training'. 'I have done a lot of training over the years and it has helped me in what I do'. 'Whenever I have asked for anything it has been reviewed'. 'They have put me through a few courses to allow me to teach other things'. 'The investment in me has been very good'. 'They provide you with training so that you can do other things'. 'They have always looked at how I can develop and how they can help me with training'. 'They have encouraged me to do things'. 'I am learning different things every day'. 'I have done various courses'. 'The training helps you to fulfil your role well'. 'Everyone is always doing something to develop themselves'. 'They do support training'.</i></p>	Developing teams
7	<p><u>Reciprocity.</u> There appeared tremendous loyalty to the company as a result of people feeling that they had been very well supported in the past by management at Alliance Learning. <i>'I feel very loyal to the company'. 'If I hadn't have come here I wouldn't be where I am so I feel owe the company in a way'. 'They look after me and I look after them'. 'We are doing very well and it is good to tell people where you work when you go to networking events'. 'I am proud to work here'. 'I am quite proud of the company'. 'I think that you have got to like where you work and I like the people that I work with too'.</i></p>	Positive working relationships
8	<p><u>Knowledge sharing.</u> As a consequence of close knit cohesive teams being in place, knowledge sharing and passing on of new learning/information was part of the culture at the organisation. <i>'We are encouraged to share knowledge and updates'. 'We always discuss what works well'. 'The sharing of good practice has done me a world of good'.</i></p>	Effective development of teams
9	<p><u>Quarterly briefings.</u> These briefings which were completed by the MD have been well received by staff at Alliance Learning who were of the opinion that they were very useful as a communication & update conduit. <i>'They are very useful and you get an oversight of the company'. 'I think it is better that we do the three monthly things because it is a good atmosphere'. 'We get told where we are up to as a company'. 'It is good because we get an insight into every department'. 'They go through all the figures and projections'. 'They are brilliant as it gives you an idea on how they are moving forward and it is good to know that we have a future'. 'You can see where the company is at'. 'It is nice to see exactly where we are up to'. 'We get the full honesty and they don't brush things under the carpet'.</i></p>	Effective communication

10	<p><u>Appraisals & 1-1 reviews.</u> These were viewed by all staff as regular and consequently representing quality conversations. <i>'The appraisals are very useful as you can put forward training and you get feedback'. 'Yeah they are useful for a roundup of what you have done'. 'We have regular 1-1's and appraisals once a year'. 'The one to ones are good'. 'During the appraisals I always receive good feedback'. 'You can discuss anything that is bothering you and it gets sorted'. 'It is nice to know that you are keeping up with your targets and that you are doing well'. 'They are good and you get a chance to mention what your worries are; it is good really'. 'It is a good meeting and you are definitely listened to'.</i></p>	Positive working environment
11	<p><u>Induction programme.</u> This very important early developmental episode was confirmed by people (who were relatively new to Alliance Learning) as being very effective and also instrumental in facilitating further early learning and development for the new member of staff. <i>'We went round all the departments which made you understand what people do and also allowed you to settle in'. 'I actually really thought it was good, it was the first place that I have been that sent you round every other department'. 'It was good and we got a lot of information'. 'I thought it was spot on and opened my eyes to see how big Alliance Learning is'. 'It was a tour of the whole facility and we were introduced to some key people'. 'They gave me information about health & safety and procedures which was good'. 'They took me to every department to meet the staff so it gave me more of an idea what they do'.</i></p>	Development of team members
12	<p><u>Verbal performance feedback.</u> This was confirmed as being regularly delivered by managers to staff on a consistent and timely basis through appraisals, 1-1's, ongoing dialogue and other informal intercessions. <i>'Yes we do get feedback and it makes me feel valued'. 'I do get praise'. 'You get feedback ongoing all the time'. Nine times out of ten you get feedback and thanked'. 'Sometimes we get emails and sometimes I get verbal feedback'. 'You get regular feedback which is good'. 'I think everyone likes being appreciated and it makes you feel better as a team as we all work hard'. 'The 1-1's are great and you get feedback then'. 'We have 1-1's so I am told how I am doing'. 'It makes you feel motivated and please with yourself'.</i></p>	Effective leadership
13	<p><u>Customer focussed teams.</u> A strong and convincing customer service philosophy existed at Alliance Learning where people were very focussed on ensuring that the customers were at the heart of everything that they did. <i>'Anyone that rings up or comes to reception we will help them as much as we can'. 'We treat everybody individually and understand that each learner comes with their own package of experiences'. 'We have strong IAG with each customer so that we can tailor the programmes and courses for them'. 'The customer is key and that's the forefront of everything'. 'Most things that you do in this line of work is customer based'. 'We are customer focussed in a lot of ways, their needs are changing so we need</i></p>	Cohesive teams

	<i>to change and move with them'. 'They put the learners first and it is about making learning enjoyable'. 'We are very focussed on the employers and learners'. 'We listen to what the customers want and we have forums with the apprenticeships'.</i>	
14	<u>Effective line managers.</u> Taking the lead from senior management at Alliance Learning, line managers were confirmed as being very supportive. People also confirmed that managers were also supportive in terms of any pastoral issues. <i>'She is just really caring and very supportive and has helped me with my qualifications'. 'He has got a very good understanding of what we do'. 'If we have any concerns we know that we can go to him for any advice and support'. 'I get on well with all my managers in the company'. 'She is very good, she is the best manager that I have ever had by a long way'. 'My manager is extremely supportive to me'. 'She is easy to talk to and very approachable'. 'My manager is straight talking and you know where you are'. 'She motivates you and when you are doing well you get praised'. 'All the managers are quite good here'. 'He works with us which is good'. 'My manager does listen to you'. 'He lets you get on with it and also supports you'. 'She is approachable, firm but fair which I think is good'.</i>	Effective leadership
15	<u>Consultation.</u> Staff at Alliance Learning confirmed that they were consulted very well and that they could have an integral part in terms of helping to take the organisation forward. <i>'When we have the company updates, managers always ask for suggestions'. 'Ideas are taken on board and they act upon them'. 'They ask me my opinion on certain subjects'. 'The communication is good really'. 'When you do the 1-1 the manager appreciates the feedback'. 'If you want to implement something and it is feasible they will put it in'. 'They ask you for ideas for the company'.</i>	Effective communication
16	<u>Learning organisation – internally.</u> Although Alliance Learning's prime externally focussed function was learning & development, this approach permeated through to the internal customer who confirmed that learning for staff was always paramount and was very well supported by senior management. <i>'I know that there are plenty of people who I have worked with who have progressed'. 'I think with this line of work there are a lot of changes and everybody is learning all the time'. 'We have to learn in order to be able to deliver'. 'I have been given the opportunities to progress in my job'. 'We do a lot of training which helps us to support the learners'.</i>	Development of team members
17	<u>People making a difference.</u> There was a real and palpable commitment to helping to change peoples' lives through the provision of learning & development at Alliance Learning. <i>'Some of the learners will go onto better jobs'. 'We make sure that they are job ready'. 'I feel that I am making people safe and that when they leave here they have the information &</i>	Positive working environment

	<p><i>knowledge which will keep them safe'. 'We see massive changes because we pick them up at 16 and take them through to around 20, they change and we contribute to them changing'. 'We work with some really outstanding companies and if we didn't do a good job they wouldn't work with us'. 'When you find them a job you think yeah! ; it is so nice when you can get a young person what they want'. 'I try my best to pass on my knowledge and make a difference'. 'We do make a difference to peoples' lives'. 'We have case studies which show we do make a difference'.</i></p>	
18	<p><u>Overall company quintessence.</u> The Specialist having dealt with Alliance Learning on several occasions, on this visit had noticed a tangible upward trajectory in terms of how the company was managed and how people felt about working there.</p> <p>In view of this the Specialist would like to highlight key factors in terms of the upbeat feel and differentiation factors at the company.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extremely well led and all people have confidence in the Executive Team. • 'Can do' attitude displayed by staff • Encouragement for people to give managers at all levels feedback • Dedicated, passionate and highly motivated staff group in place. • Inspirational leaders and managers who were excellent role models for others • Compassionate and caring management approach • People at the company felt that they made a difference to learners lives • Learners at the heart of everything that the business did • Senior management welcomed external feedback • People genuinely feeling that Alliance Learning was a great place to work. 	Positive working environment
19	<p><u>Communication.</u> As a consequence of senior management being extremely accessible & perceptible and the use of regular update meetings, people felt that they were regularly kept up to date and could also input ideas for improvements where appropriate.</p> <p>People indicated that they felt that communication had improved over the years. <i>'Before you were kept in the dark but now it is a lot more open now and a lot better'. 'Nothing is ever hidden here, it is so transparent and that is why we are so successful'. 'The quarterly meetings are good and tell people what is happening'. 'I feel that we are kept informed of what is going on in the company'. 'It is really good and we have daily meetings'. 'As soon as something happens it is communicated to you'.</i></p>	Effective communication

20	<u>Developing leaders.</u> Everybody, no matter what role were expected to display leadership skills at Alliance Learning. <i>'I am pretty much encouraged to do things'. 'You get the chance to champion things in your area'. 'I am expected to lead'.</i>	Effective leadership
21	<u>Role model emphasis.</u> Exemplar practice was always seen as vital in terms of taking the organisation and as a result people were expected to be role models not only for learners but for other staff. <i>'You do have an influence on people'.</i>	Cohesive working and effective leadership
22	<u>Pride in the organisation.</u> A palpable pride was seen by the Specialist in terms of how people respected senior management and how they saw their roles contributing to the success of Alliance Learning. <i>'You do a good job and Alliance name gets put around'. 'It's about the work that we do for the apprenticeships and helping them get a job which is really good'. 'Because we so many people coming through and achieving, you can be proud'. 'The staff work so hard to help people achieve and they get good jobs through our training'. 'I love working here and I am very proud to work for Alliance learning'. 'I think it is a family, it is not just a company that you work for'. 'Everybody wants the business to succeed and try their best to make this happen'. 'They have made me who I am in terms of my job'.</i>	Positive working environment
23	<u>Corporate Social Responsibility focus.</u> Alliance Learning were very eager to make a difference to peoples' lives and also have a strong impact on community sustainability. Their various approaches around CSR were excellent examples of this (community open day, Horwich carnival, Bolton Hospice and other charity events) and as a learning organisation they were also working towards several longer term tangible advantageous outcomes for their many learners. <i>'We are involved in a lot of networks and charities'.</i>	Focus on longer term sustainability
24	<u>Two-way feedback culture.</u> People explained that there was a healthy feedback culture at Alliance Learning where they could provide their managers with upward feedback without being concerned about any negative repercussions in the future. (Several examples provided to the Specialist but not for inclusion in the report due to ensuring that confidentiality rules were maintained). Comments made by staff which backed this open approach by managers included: <i>'You can walk in and talk if need be'. 'You are encouraged to give managers feedback'. 'We have a weekly meeting and we discuss things and I can be honest with my manager'. 'If it is looking at ways of improving they take it on board'.</i>	Effective leadership and communication
25	<u>Positive 'can do' attitude of staff.</u> The Specialist encountered very positive people who were fervent about what they did and possessed a 'can do' attitude which must portend well for the learners. <i>'Work wise I am positive'. 'I always try my best'. 'I love what I do and passing my knowledge on to other people'. 'I like to be successful in what I do'.</i>	Positive working environment

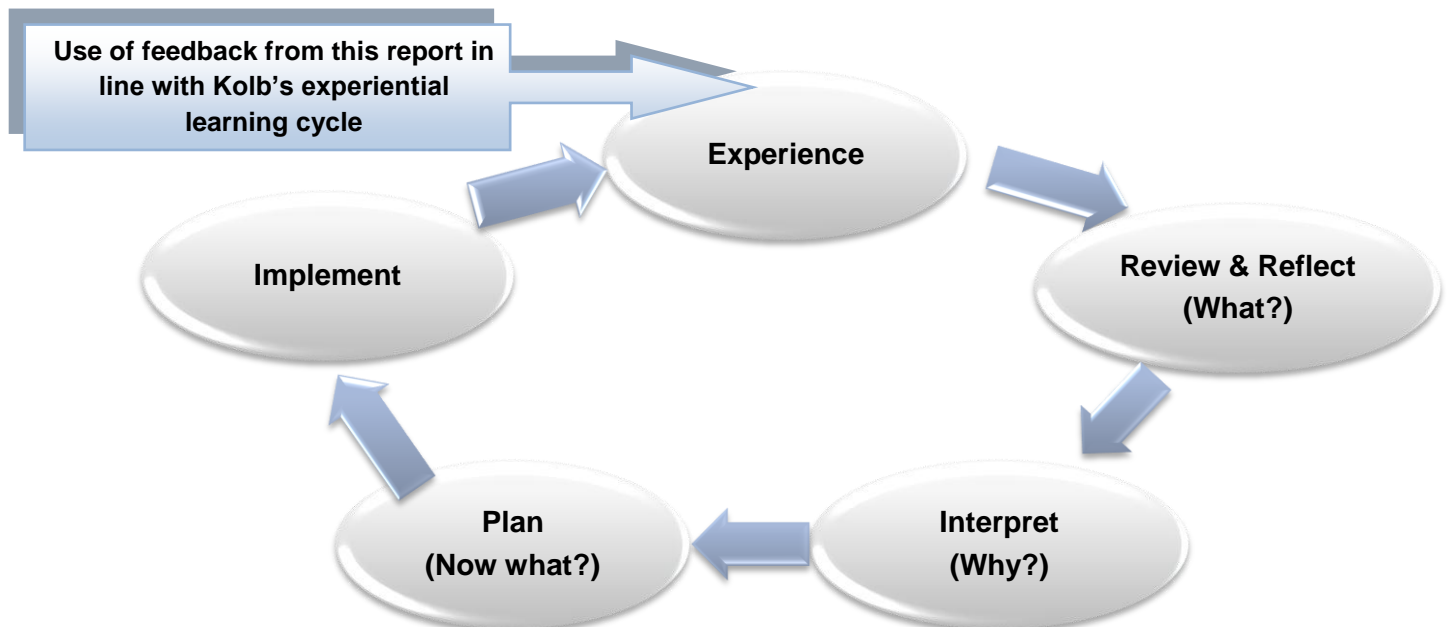
26	<u>Reward & Recognition.</u> The employee of the quarter and employee of the year were seen as excellent vehicles for recognising people efforts. <i>'It is good that you can nominate colleagues'.</i> <i>'The recognition events are very nice'.</i> <i>'I feel that they appreciate what you do and you do get emails from managers that say they appreciate what you have done'.</i>	Valuing team members
27	<u>Effective working relationships.</u> In what could be a very busy working environ, people appeared to have a very positive regard for their colleagues and managers at various levels within the organisation. <i>'99% of the people get on and everyone has a laugh'.</i> <i>'Everyone is supportive, friendly and positive'.</i>	Cohesive teams
28	<u>Change management.</u> As a consequence of internal and external influences for change, senior management had promoted a culture where change was viewed as natural. As a result people fully embraced transformation at Alliance Learning and this can only auger well for the organisation and the learners in the future. <i>'Nobody throws barriers up'.</i>	Focus on longer term sustainability
29	<u>Learning & Development planning.</u> There was a clear 'justification' process in place in terms of aligning peoples' learning & development identified to the potential impact on the individual, team and Alliance Learning.	Developing team members
30	<u>Continuous improvement.</u> The Specialist, (having assessed & visited Alliance Learning several times) was convinced that senior management at the organisation welcomed feedback and fully embraced suggestions in respect of these assisting with continuous development of the business. As mentioned previously in this report, people were effervescent in their praise for senior management at Alliance Learning and as a result of the changes made; they indicated that job satisfaction had improved. <i>'They have introduced a lot of changes for the better'.</i> <i>'They are always looking for new avenues and funding sources'.</i> <i>'There is always something being improved or upgraded'.</i> <i>'We are always trying to get better and go towards grade one'.</i>	Focus on longer term sustainability

What could be developed further?

	Particular area identified during the visit	Benefits to Alliance Learning
1	<u>Development & integration of core values.</u> In view of the fact that there seems to be strong, palpable evidence of 'real' goodwill and loyalty to the organisation, consideration should be given to developing a set of core values. Once developed, consideration should be given to how to integrate them into all processes at Alliance Learning. (i.e. Recruitment, induction, appraisals, team briefs, leadership development, learning and recognition & reward). This may assist with continuing to ensure the current implicit values were organic within Alliance Learning and also help with sustainability for the future.	Enhances consistency and sustainability
2	<u>Focussed talent management development.</u> There was no doubting that the organisation had supported its managers in the past in terms of developing their knowledge, skills and abilities. However, senior management need to ensure that in relation to future development activities more focus was made on the areas identified as in need of development as a result of the performance management appraisal review. The areas identified as in need of development at the appraisal meeting should then be reflected in a personal development plan for a manager (connected to succession planning & talent management) which was linked to the priorities for Alliance Learning.	More cost effective development of managers and better aligned to performance feedback
3	<u>Action research for managers – linked to talent management.</u> Consideration should be given to developing specific deeper outcomes linked to an early and ongoing transference of learning into the workplace as a result of management development. Formalisation of the process in terms of setting of post development objectives (linked to 'live' projects) for people who have benefited from a development event should assist here.	Return on investment identified early and learning used expeditiously within the workplace
4	<u>Use of experiential learning in teams.</u> Consideration should be given to aligning 'Kolb's' experiential learning cycle to each team de-brief in order to extract learning from any issues or good practice identified in order to share learning within and across teams. In order to build on learning, implementing periodic team SOAR (Strengths Opportunities, Aspirations & Results) may also be beneficial here in terms of helping to tease out any potential issues at the 'pinch' point rather than at any subsequent 'crunch' point.	Consistency of approach and enhanced sharing of learning
5	<u>Post development reviews.</u> Although there was some use of a 'justification' process prior to development taking place (examining costs and links to role), consideration should be given to managers being involved in the early monitoring of events by examining any initial post	Adds to impact assessment

	development activities. This would allow managers to set post developmental goals linked to business objectives.	
6	<u>Overall strategic evaluation.</u> Although the Specialist was more than confident that senior management at Alliance Learning had started to comprehend the impact of learning and development & people management strategies on performance (R.O.I.), further development of a strategic evaluation could be made. It may also worth considering how Alliance Learning can engage managers at varying levels within the organisation in gathering data in respect of any impact from learning & development/ people management strategies.	Establishes the full picture of considerable investment in people and learning & development strategies
7	<u>Critical friend approach.</u> In order to build on the strong mentoring philosophy at the organisation, staff at varying levels should endeavour to develop a critical friend approach in order to assist them to triangulate any concerns and also for them to bounce off ideas or thoughts with a particular colleague in a non-formal setting.	Enhances the mentor relationship
8	<u>Bright ideas scheme.</u> In order to build on information sharing and the years of experience which people have, senior management should consider developing a bright ideas scheme and link it to their reward & recognition strategy. A 'you said – we listened' approach could also be used & adopted in order to 'close the loop' and achieve 'quick wins' from staff ideas.	Assists with lean working and development of new working practices
9	<u>Cross functional knowledge – leading to promoting the business.</u> In terms of continuing to grow the business, there may be a need for senior management to further facilitate peoples' understanding of what the internal customer does and how this affects cross selling of the business. All staff need to be aware (through whatever role that they do) that they are all marketers for Alliance Learning and that they can influence people in terms of attracting new business or retaining clients. Having a better knowledge of the full business should assist with this.	Team synergy
10	<p><u>Customer Service Excellence.</u> In view on the clear focus on putting the clients at the heart of everything that the service does, consideration should be given to being assessed against the CSE Standard which covers the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer insight, • Leadership, policy & culture, • Information & access, • Delivery • Timeliness & quality). <p>The CSE Standard will assist with a focus on:</p>	Focussed teams

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer journey mapping • Segmentation • Benchmarking • Client satisfaction • Consultation with customers 	
11	<p><u>Health & Well-being strategy & approach.</u> Senior management at Alliance Learning should consider completing a self-check on the IIP website in respect of this area in order to build upon the work that they have done recently in terms of supporting flexible working and work-life balance.</p> <p>Consideration should then be given to Alliance Learning being assessed against the Investors in People Health & Well-being good practice award in the future.</p>	Enhances people management
12	<p><u>Revised standard – version 6.</u> In view of the fact that a revised version of the IIP standard has been launched consideration should be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending an update workshop • Visiting the IIP website • Completing the on-line self-assessment • Liaising and keeping in touch with the Specialist • 'Mapping' current good practice to the new standard 	Helps with the transition



Overall findings

Strategy & Operational Focus

As a dynamic, fast moving & continually evolving organisation, senior management at Alliance Learning had established a clear purpose, ('*Mission statement – Success through learning*') and vision (*Alliance learning will be the natural first choice for the workforce of the future. By delivering outstanding teaching and learning, we will meet the needs and expectations of the local economy*). They had also developed their strategy in line with several critical success factors (outcomes), which were as follows:



As a result of regular meetings, appraisals, visibility of managers, collaborative working and updates from senior management (3 monthly update) people were clear on how they contributed to the organisation's success through:

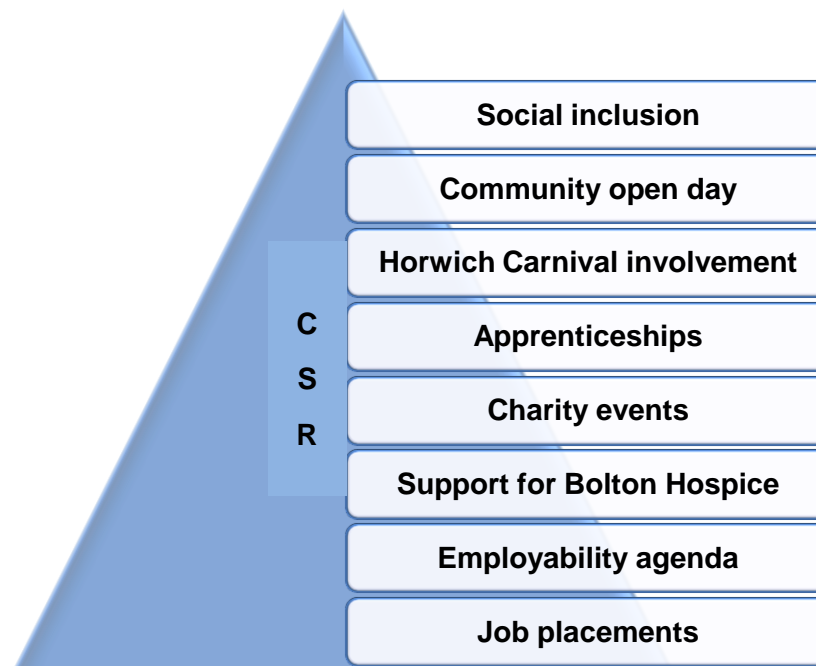
- Working as a cohesive team
- Delivering high quality learner services
- Meeting learners' needs at all times.
- Helping colleagues
- Ensuring that learners were 'job ready'
- Managing teams
- Auditing, supporting people and system management.
- Providing internal support
- Being professional at all times and provide a good service
- Being very flexible in the service provided and listening to customers
- Completing projects and tasks
- Providing IAG
- Meeting key performance indicators and deadlines

Several positive comments were made to the Specialist by members of staff at Alliance Learning in terms of being customer focussed, committed to high quality delivery and that managers instilled this ethos their staff. *'We are very much customer focused and we do listen to the customers'. 'The customers will come back because of the atmosphere here'. 'We use blended learning to help them'.*

In terms of developing the strategy, senior management at Alliance Learning used several interventions to involve people in affecting strategy decisions.

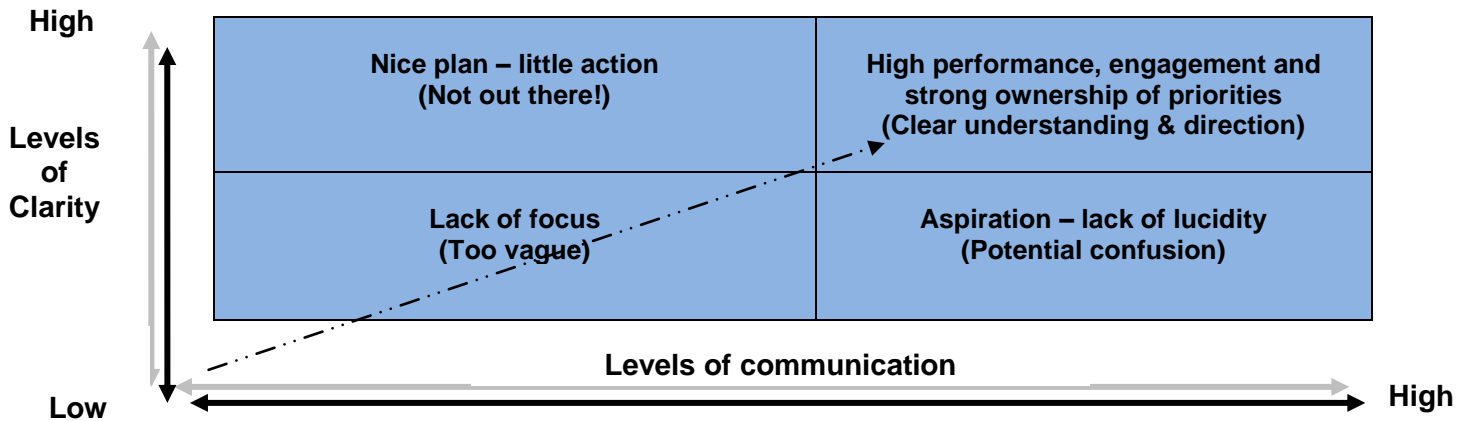


As mentioned in the areas of strengths section of this report, with regard to corporate social responsibility, senior management at Alliance Learning were very well aware of their large operational footprint in the Northwest region and had therefore developed a cogent & cohesive approach in this area. Some of the key areas where Alliance Learning influences the local community are as shown below:



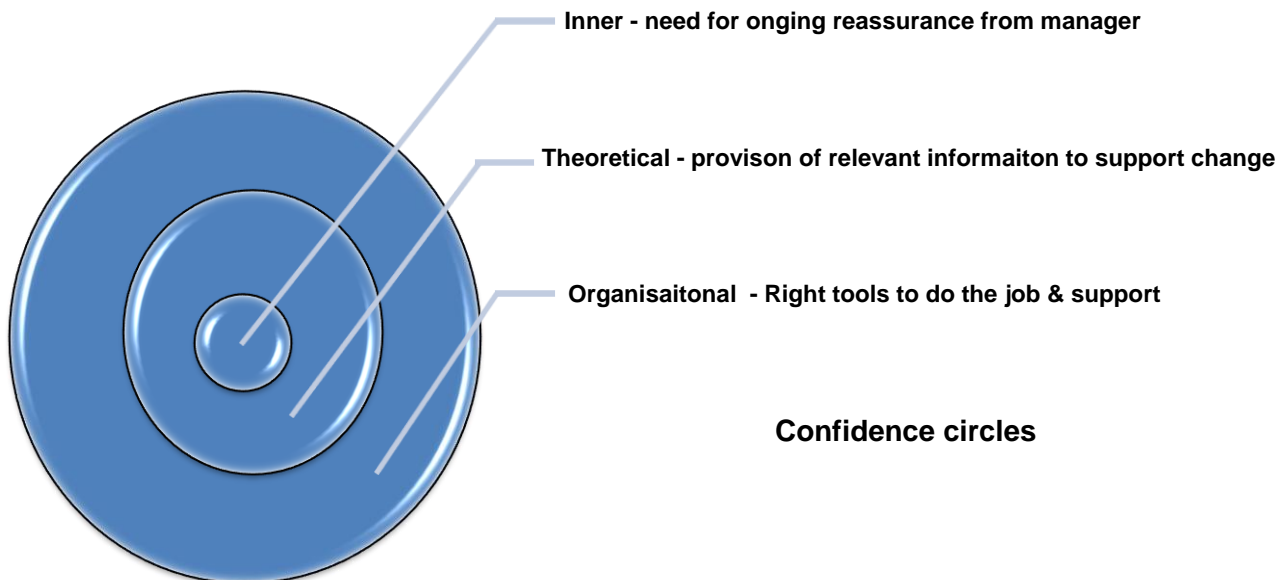
People that worked at Alliance Learning were fully cognisant of how their work impacted on the wider communities and how important that the company were corporately socially responsible at all times.

Although communication was viewed as very good, senior management at the organisation in terms of communicating their future strategy need to continue to ensure that high levels of clarity in line with high levels of communication (as to the priorities for Alliance Learning) were always achieved as demonstrated in the model below.



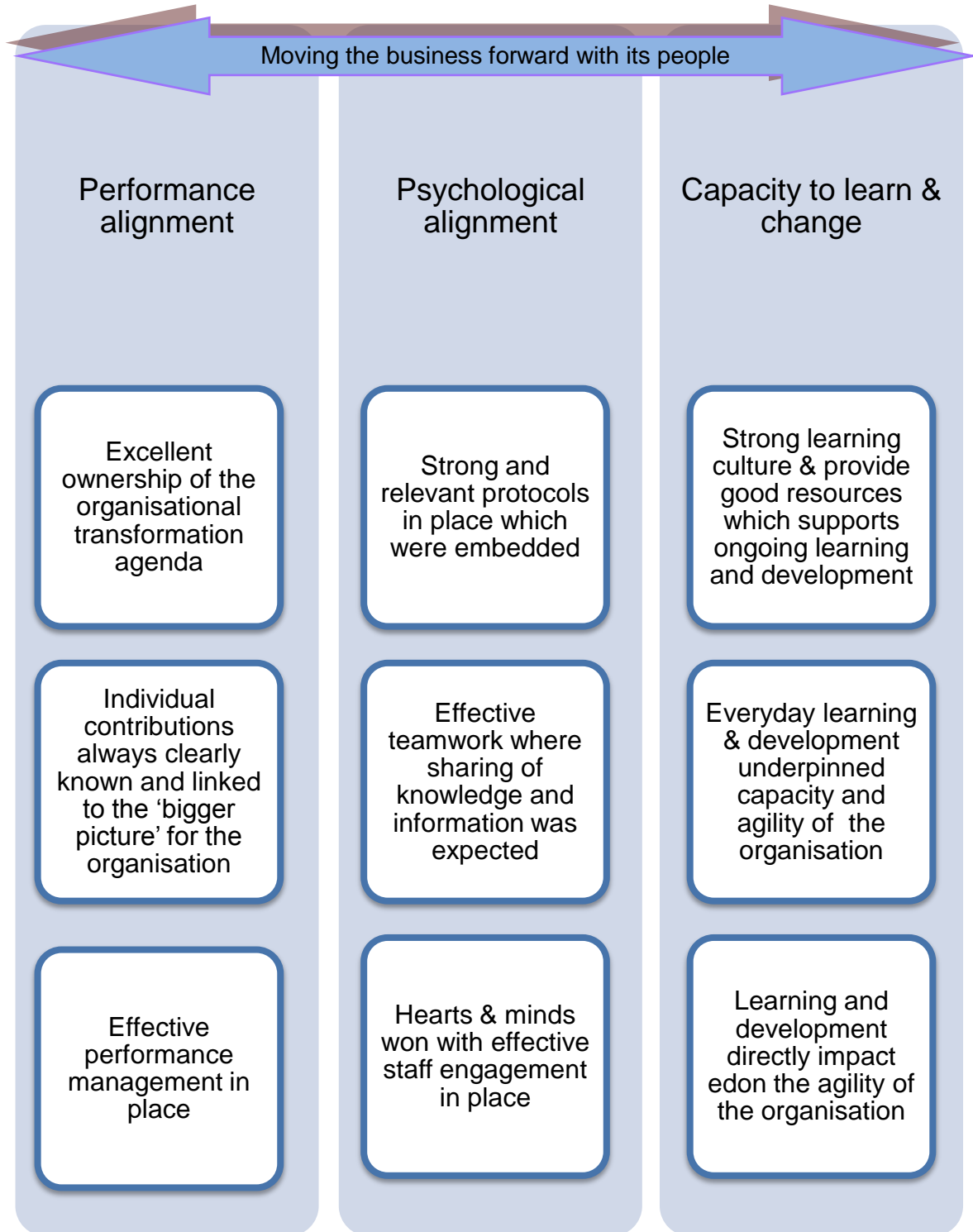
As referred to in the areas of strengths section of this report, staff morale, job focus and motivation were very high and people interviewed by the Specialist appeared to want to go the extra mile for the customers, management and their numerous colleagues within Alliance Learning. Several very positive comments were made to the Specialist in terms of working for Alliance Learning. *“It is a real nice atmosphere to work in”. “All the staff are treated well and get on”. “We are like a big family”.*

Senior management at Alliance Learning were very mindful of the need to always ensure that members of staff felt that they were developed & supported (cross functional skills development) in a way commensurate with any specific skills gap identified so that they could feel confident to fully deliver the strategy (capacity) and continue to operate as a valuable member of the team (capability).



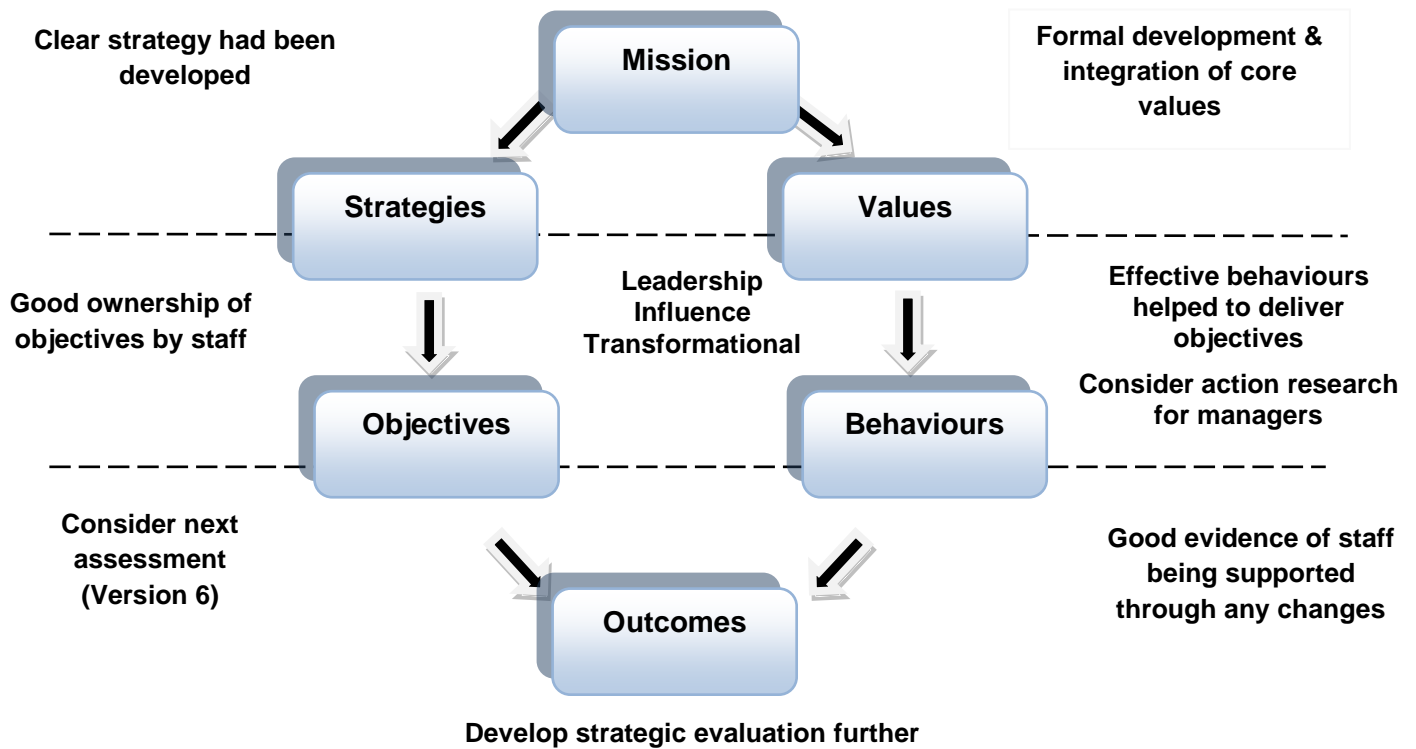
People confirmed to the Specialist that they were allowed to develop their skills and build their own capability at Alliance Learning. *‘I have been on various training courses and health & safety training’. ‘They ask all the time what training that you feel could help you to progress in your job role’. ‘They have helped me to develop over the years and are very good at recognising people’s potential’. ‘You are always encouraged to do training which will widen your experience’.*

In relation to continuing to take the organisation forward the Specialist found exemplar practices at Alliance Learning which were in conjunction with the three main areas of high performance working as outlined by Professor Michael Beer in relation to high performance working.

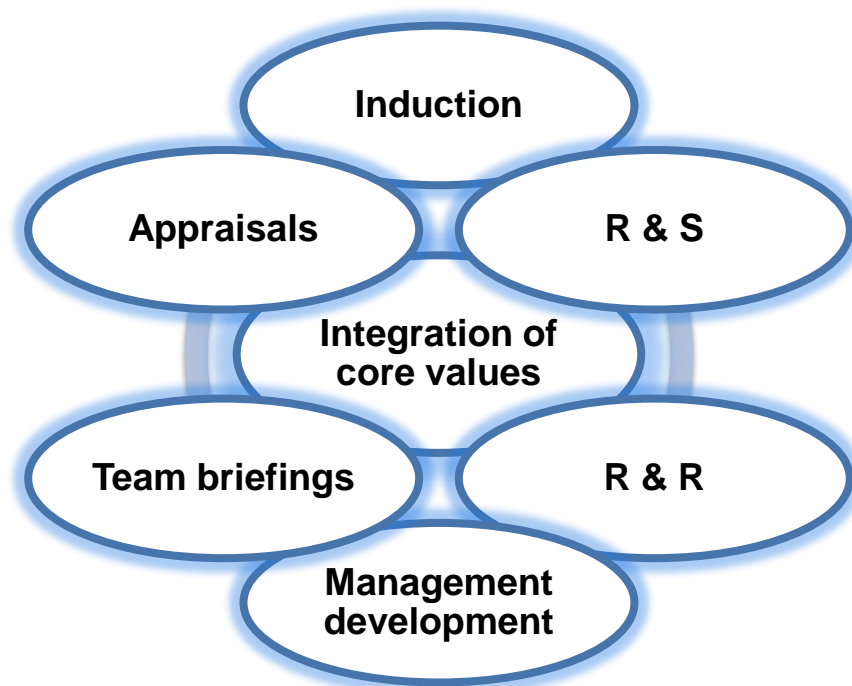


Constantly reflecting on the three pillars of alignment (shown above) will allow senior management at Alliance Learning to ensure that a strong configuration between the areas underpinned high performance working which impacted on the success of the business. This should assist in the future in terms of continuing to perform extremely well and also in terms of developing highly focussed, happy staff that were always willing to embrace change in a positive manner.

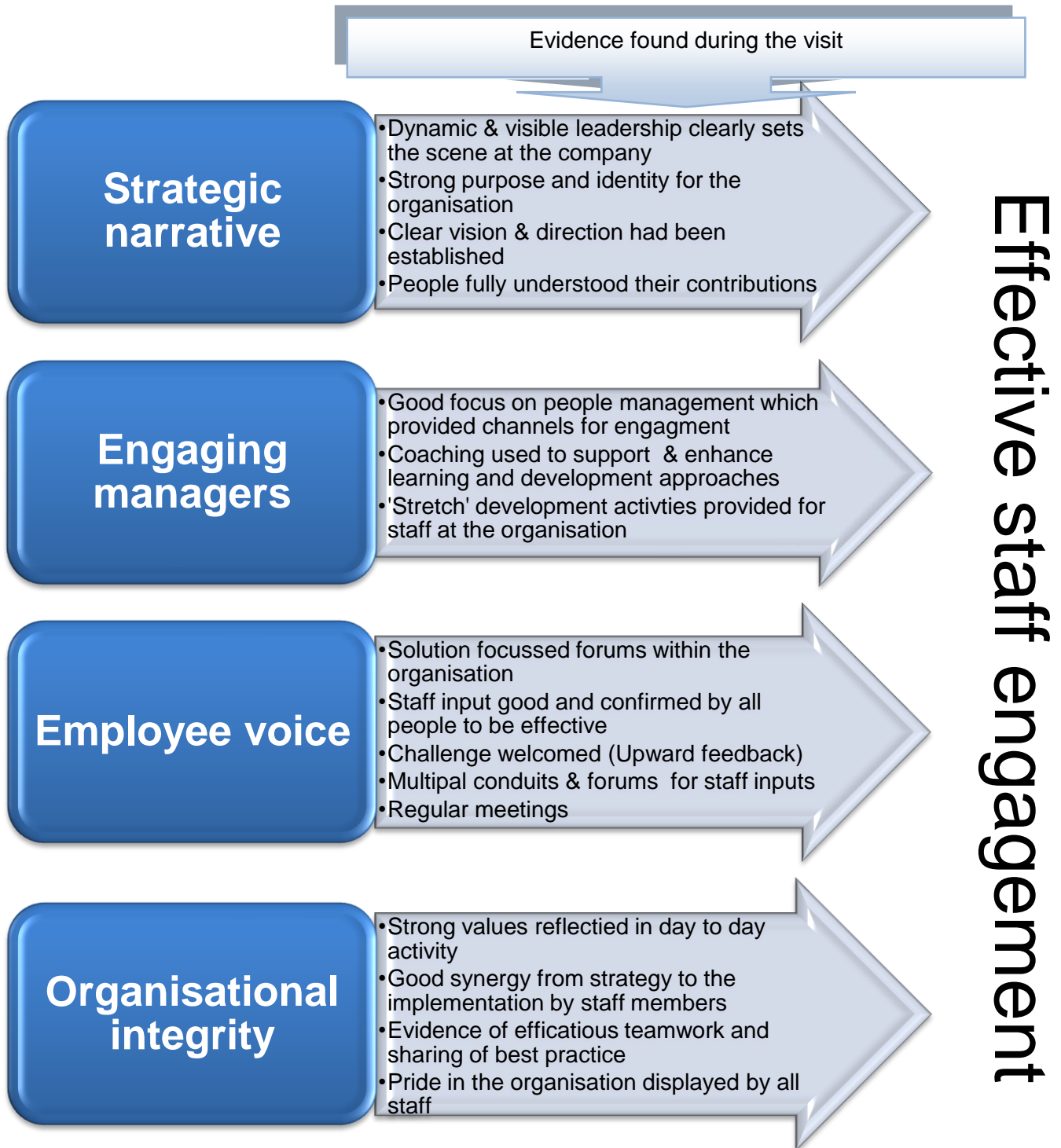
In relation to further developing the business, senior management should be cognisant of the need to ensure that the business moved forward aligned to the model illustrated below



Several implicit values were in place at Alliance Learning (i.e. passionate about learners, being positive, changing lives, excellent teaching & learning, commitment and professionalism) and the organisation needs to clarify these further and ensure that they were embedded in all processes within the organisation. With regard to this area and building upon the 'common purpose' extremely evident within the company and assisting with sustainability and the 'Alliance Learning way', they senior management should formalise a clear set of values and consider integrating them into the following processes.



Staff consultation was excellent at Alliance Learning and the Specialist would like to make reference to the governments engage for success agenda (MacLeod report – ‘engage for success’) in terms of the four enablers in connection to effective staff engagement.



Senior management at Alliance Learning were keen to ensure that members of staff had a strong voice and could input new ideas where appropriate. The consistent use of regular meetings, huddles, social events, quarterly updates and strong visible management were very good examples of this intent in action.

Specific questions that were asked to everyone – as requested by the Chief Executive.

1. What are your thoughts on how the company is performing?

- *'We are performing well since the Chief Executive took over'.*
- *'She brings new ideas on board; she feeds you rather than direct you'.*
- *'She takes your ideas forward'.*
- *'I think it is doing fairly well and there are lots of courses coming in'.*
- *'From where we were to where we are now is good'.*
- *'She has given everyone a boost'.*
- *'Sales have increased'.*
- *'I think that it is doing really well, you can see how we are growing'.*
- *'I think that we are doing well in terms of what is happening to the levy'.*
- *'We are winning a lot of awards and I think that we are doing well as a business'.*
- *'Good I feel that we have plenty of company updates so we know where we are at; I think we are doing well'.*
- *'I think overall it is doing really well but there are a couple of issues in some areas and there are plans in place'.*
- *'Overall well, we are kept up to date'.*
- *'It must be going really well as it has been going fifty years'.*
- *'Very well considering there has been lots of changes happening with government'.*
- *'I think it is doing well and they are improving left, right and centre'.*
- *'I would say quite well, we have a lot of apprentices'.*
- *'The company is performing extremely well and the staff have a new mind set now'.*
- *'I think that the company is performing well with regards to departments working together'.*
- *'I think that we are doing exceptionally well and have turned a corner'.*
- *'Generally I think that we are doing very well'.*
- *'It seems to be really taking off at the moment'.*
- *'I think we are doing ok but could do better'.*
- *'We are doing well and everyone is working and pulling together'.*

2. How do you feel about the current CEO and the management team/structure?

- *'I think that we are managed well and have the right balance'.*
- *'The management that we have now are very approachable'.*
- *'They are looking at different things and they are great'.*
- *'The Chief Exec is always calm with you and there to support you'.*
- *'Whenever you need anything from the managers they support you with what you need'.*
- *'I couldn't say anything bad about the CEO she has looked after us very well'.*
- *'It is a really good management team'.*
- *'I really love the CEO, she is so approachable and I know if I had any issues I could go and speak to her'.*
- *'I think that we have a strong executive and management team and the impression that I get that it is quite stressful; they need more support'.*
- *'We still need more ground level staff'.*
- *'I like it and it has improved; the management team put their life into this company'.*
- *'The new structure works better in terms of day to day support'.*
- *'She is a nice lady'. 'The door is always open and there are no barriers there'.*
- *'She is amazing; is Alliance Learning through and through, she lives and breathes the company'.*
- *'She cares about people and that's why people stay for a long time'.*
- *'I think that they are awesome and have given me opportunities'.*
- *'I think the company is well run and they keep us up to date with everything'.*
- *'The Chief Executive is excellent and she has made some tremendous improvements'.*
- *'The general consensus of everyone is that she made some very good changes'.*
- *'She seems really dedicated to the company'.*
- *'She drives with passion and she lives and breathes Alliance'.*
- *'It's a lot better you can speak to all the managers really'.*
- *'We have a good management structure and they are very dedicated'.*
- *'I think that they are doing well and have got it right'.*

3. Do you feel valued within your job role?

- *'She does give you praise where praise is due'.*
- *'I do get praise and that is one of the things that I strive off'.*
- *'I feel like I have been given a lot of responsibilities which make you feel needed'.*
- *'I have got a lot of passion for Alliance learning'.*
- *'They have pushed me to do the best that I can'.*
- *'Definitely, I get good feedback and positive comments'.*
- *'By learners, colleagues and management'.*
- *'Yeah I do'.*
- *'Most definitely'.*
- *'We have a one to one with our managers where you get good feedback'.*
- *'If you do well there are opportunities to win awards'.*
- *'I do feel valued and get told quite a lot which is nice'.*
- *'I often get thanks from my manager and the executive team'.*
- *'Just through constant appraisals of how you are doing'.*
- *'I do feel valued and I do receive praise'.*
- *'It is nice to get praise when we are busy and I do feel valued'.*
- *'I think sometimes you don't but most times you do'.*
- *'It is tough I have to admit but you do feel valued'.*
- *'As a member of Alliance Learning team, I do'.*
- *'I have had my 1-1 and everything was good'.*
- *'We do get regular feedback now'.*
- *'It is just the praise that is passed on'.*
- *'I do and I think that this passes on to the learners'.*
- *Managers do take the time to give you feedback when you have done well'.*
- *'I keep getting thanked for what I do'.*
- *'The do value you and have the confidence in you'.*

4. What improvements do you feel could be made within the company?

- *'More support with clerical administration for certain roles'.*
- *'Another senior manager to relieve the pressure on the top'.*
- *'More cross selling'.*
- *'More staff in certain areas'.*
- *'Probably a bit more communication'.*
- *'Not that I know of'.*
- *'I think that we need a bigger marketing team'.*
- *'Additional projects'.*
- *'We are constantly improving'.*
- *'I have no idea'.*
- *'Long term further expands on the things that we do'.*
- *'More equipment and resources but that has improved as well'.*
- *'A new building and to have further growth in the business'.*
- *'More resources at times'.*
- *'We have made so many improvements over the last 12 months'.*
- *'Perhaps a few more managers'.*
- *'Sometimes there are problems when people leave which affects the workloads'.*
- *'Cover when people are off'.*
- *'I can't really think of any'.*
- *'We have changed for the better and are really moving forward'.*
- *'Not that I have seen yet'.*
- *'Salary reviews actually taking place'.*
- *'I feel that things have been improving, so I have not got any suggestions to make'.*
- *'I don't think there are any to be honest'.*
- *'Potential for a staff rep to attend board meetings now and again to give some general information to the board and help them understand what we do on a day to day basis'.*

5. Are you updated on company issues/news etc.?

- *'We have team meetings, staff briefings and we are always getting emails from management and HR'.*
- *'Formally we have the quarterly meetings which are good'.*
- *'Obviously team meetings are good and we have regular meetings with our manager'.*
- *'Yes that is weekly'.*
- *'Yes we are'.*
- *'We have management meetings which get disseminated down to our route meetings'.*
- *'They don't just cover the facts and figures they cover employee of the quarter'.*
- *'We do get quite a few emails'.*
- *'We have staff suggestions and forums'.*
- *'We have quarterly meetings which are ok'.*
- *'We have company newsletter and we are updated by heads of departments'.*
- *'We have quarterly meetings and several other meetings regularly'.*
- *'We have ops huddles every two weeks'.*
- *'The managers know what they are doing and they disseminate things down'.*
- *'More than ever these days'.*
- *'We have regular meetings and those are important'.*
- *'We have regular staff meetings and regular emails'.*
- *'We have our 1-1's and also are told when things change or have been updated'.*
- *'We have departmental meetings which are good'.*
- *'At the departmental meetings with discuss changes and issues'.*
- *'They do keep us up to date more now'.*
- *'Communication has improved'.*
- *'My line manager briefs me regularly and we get quarterly meetings where they tell us every nook and cranny, it's really good'.*
- *We get the newsletter and she holds regular staff briefings'.*
- *'The quarterly meetings tell us what is happening'.*

Leadership effectiveness

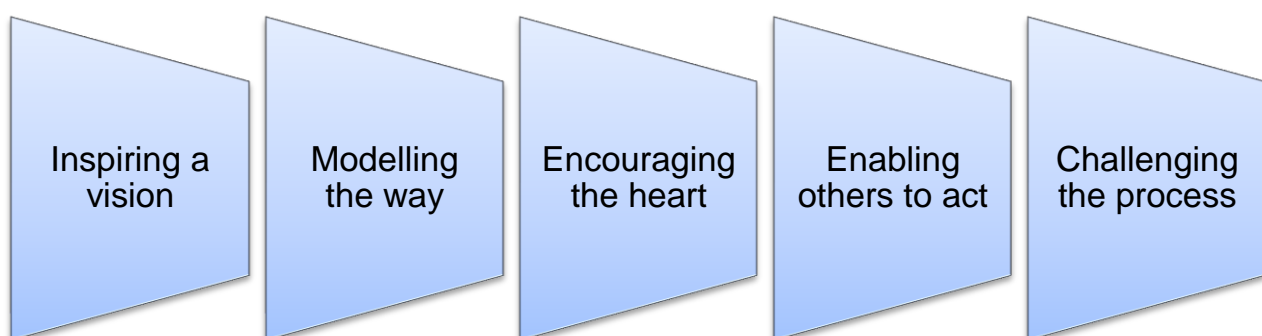
Whilst continuing to move Alliance Learning forward in a positive manner through any changes, skilful & unique leadership were considered essential at all times. Senior management at Alliance Learning deployed both transactional (i.e. Planning, job allocation, task identification, development of strategies & task identification) and transformational (i.e. Motivating, Inspiring, coaching & consultative) leadership styles and always tried to adopt an open, honest and enabling approach with their staff. *'Using the right people to do the right jobs'. 'A big part of my life is Alliance'. 'We do the quarterly meetings and everyone knows what we are doing with everything'. 'I don't ask people to do anything that I wouldn't do'. 'It is about trusting and empowering the staff to do it themselves'.*

Transparent & hands on management was still very much encouraged & expected by senior management and this approach provided effective ongoing support when needed. Managers at Alliance Learning proactively supported staff through formal and informal intercessions (i.e. Team meetings, 1-1 meetings, regular dialogue, appraisals, informal coaching, supporting flexible working, support for training, constructive feedback and general advice & guidance). *'I support my team really well, we have regular meetings'. 'I feel that I motivate the team well'. 'You need to know your team well'. 'I treat them as I want to be treated myself'. 'My style is not big stick as it wouldn't get you anywhere'.*

People at Alliance Learning fully acknowledged that their managers were very accessible and visible. *'Very supportive and you can go to them at any time'. 'My manager is easy to get along with and if I am ever stuck I get supported'. 'My manager does not overload me with work and is well organised really'. 'I can't fault my manager, she is very approachable'. 'He has pushed me to move forward'. 'Without my manager I would not be where I am today'. 'I am very well supported by my manager'.*

Senior management had engendered a strong culture at Alliance Learning where people were expected to work as a cohesive unit and bring a positive focus to the organisation at all times. This culture was again confirmed by staff. *'We have set up a committee to plan the open day'. 'It is not just one person's idea, it is everybody combined'. 'We are encouraged to work together; I think that it is important'.*

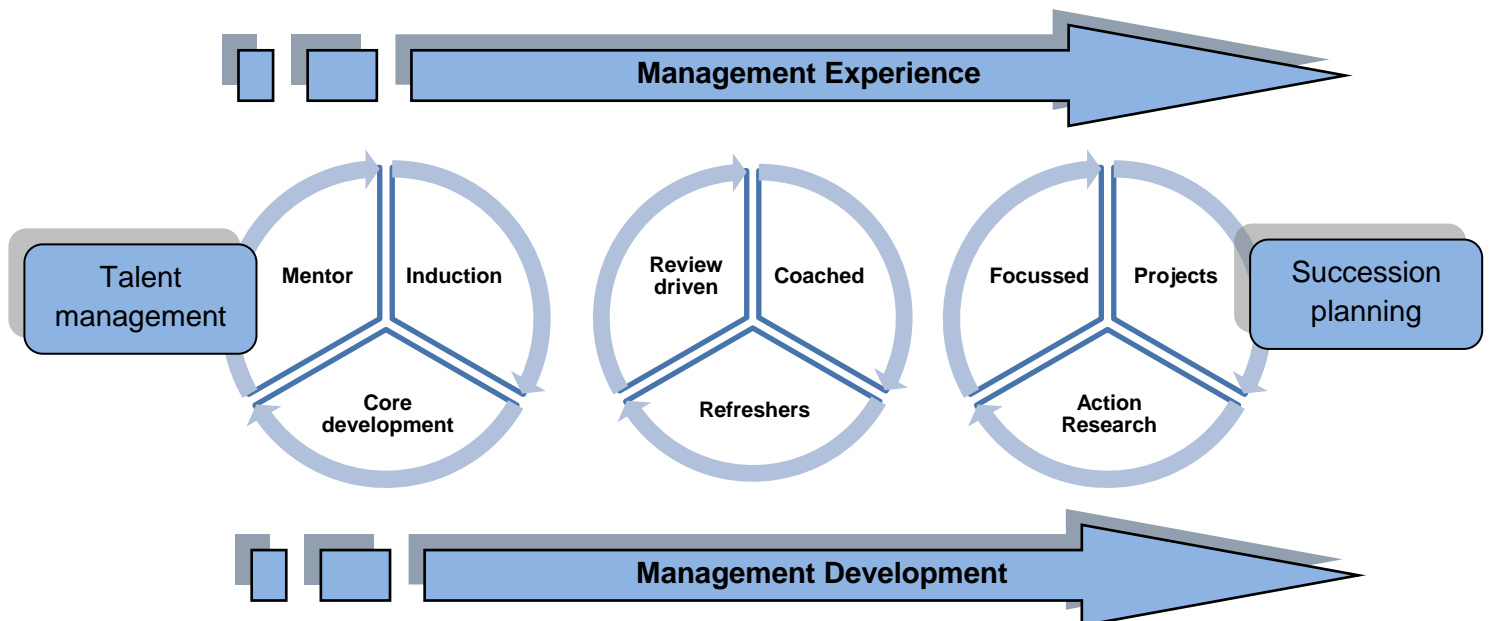
Empowerment appeared very strong with all people expected to exhibit leadership capabilities at Alliance Learning. This certainly was as a result of strong encouragement in line with effective leadership taking place across the organisation. This appeared to follow the pathway of Kouzes Posers 5 leadership principles in relation to moving the operational strategy forward with its people.



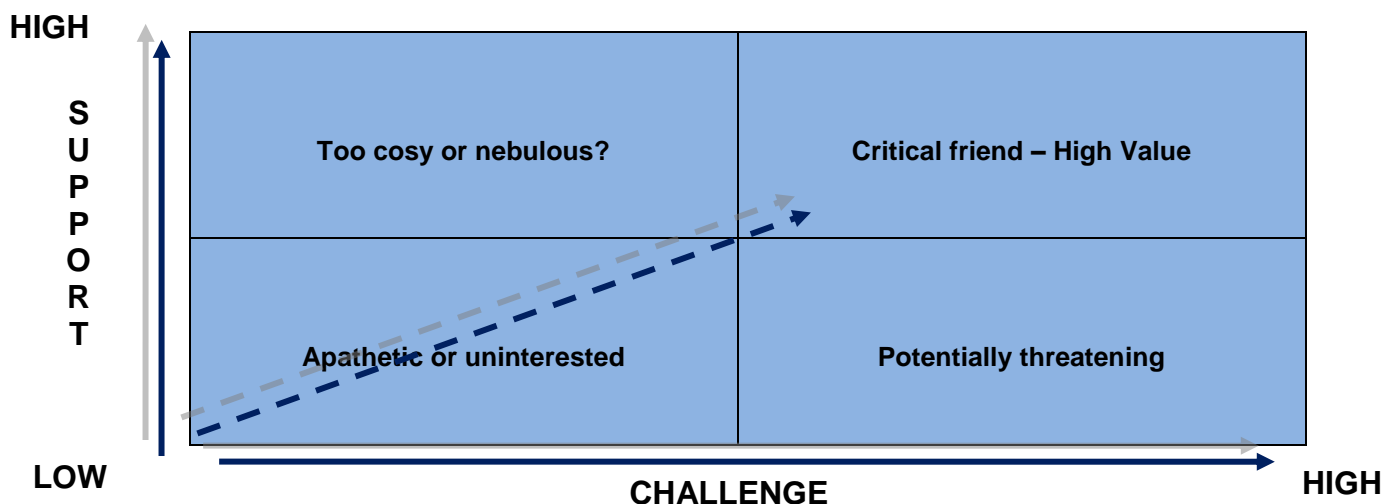
As a consequence of this enabling approach shown by managers, members of staff at Alliance Learning certainly felt trusted and also they felt that they made a major contribution to the business through being involved in decision making at different levels.

Strong empowerment was confirmed by people interviewed during the assessment and this impacted on the overall good job satisfaction & high morale shown by staff at Alliance Learning. *'They let you get on with it'. 'Although I felt nervous at first, I feel that my confidence has grown massively and they let me go to events'.*

However, in terms of future management development in line with the potential for change, senior management at Alliance Learning may need to continue to consider what specific development may be needed for potential future leaders? A talent management process should be sustained with a view to enhancing succession planning for the future.



It may important that senior managers, managers and staff (for ongoing support) identify a 'critical friend'. This may have advantages in terms of acting as a sounding board, receiving balanced constructive performance feedback, triangulating viewpoints and also exchanging ideas.

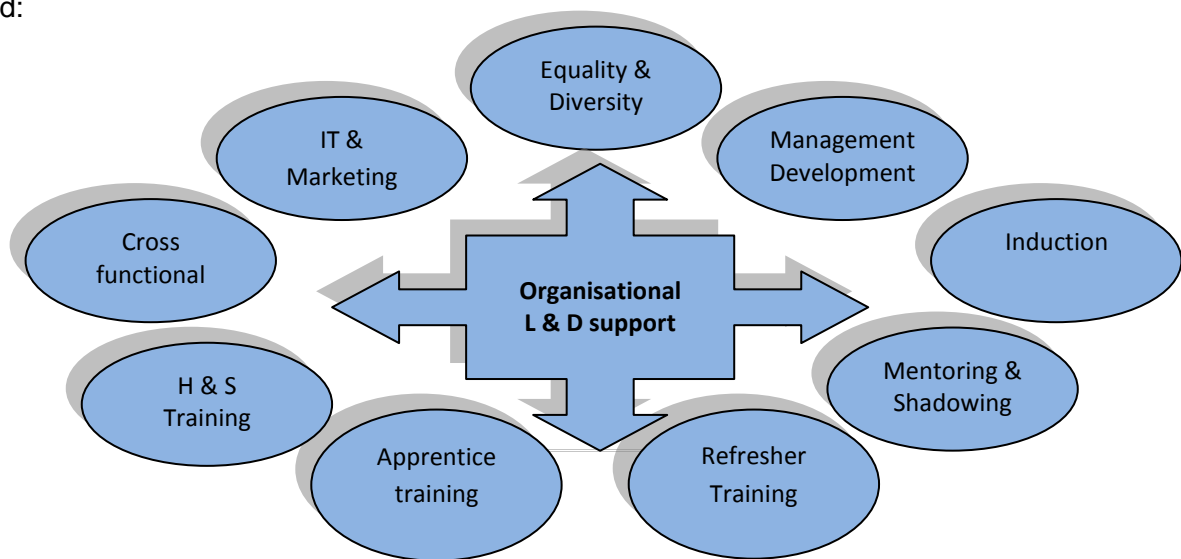


It is also essential for the development of effective future leaders, (talent management and succession planning) that the organisation continues to grow its managers and seek consistency of approach across all levels. More focussed feedback, development and transfer of knowledge into the workplace should ensure that managers at Alliance Learning always perform their roles in a mainly transformational manner which should assist the organisation to move forward in a positive manner with its people.

Continuous improvement

Senior management at Alliance Learning were still extremely eager to implement continuous improvements throughout the business and there was no doubt that despite the numerous challenges, they were continuing to be a fast moving and nascent organisation. People appeared contented to be part of an organisation that was moving forward. *'They are always watching what goes on in the company and if you suggest anything they will act upon it straight away'. 'She has the company's best interest at heart and she has brought in a lot of new courses'. 'The one thing that I have noticed is that they are always trying to improve staff'. 'They are always looking at new projects'.*

As mentioned in areas of strengths and in other parts of this report, there was excellent evidence of good team synergy in an environment of reciprocity, resulting in a strong culture of sharing of information & expertise being evident at the organisation. Learning and development episodes connected to the effective delivery of quality training for clients and adapting to any changes at Alliance Learning was still very much viewed by Senior Management as being pivotal to supporting the operation and these included:

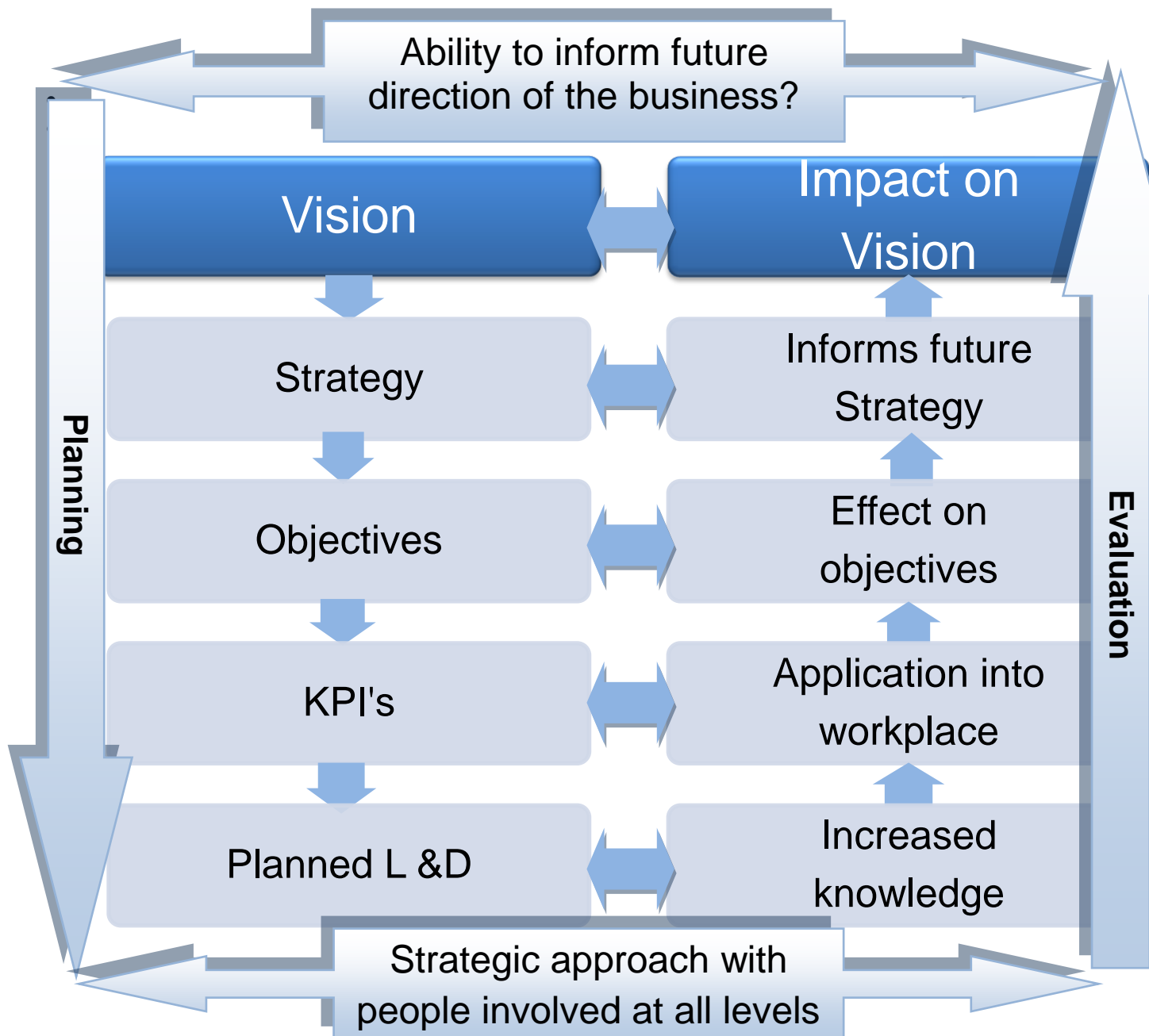


People confirmed that the support that they had received in relation to training & development was very effective and also that they had opportunity to identify development areas for themselves. *'On your appraisals you are asked to put forward what training you require so that it can be put on next year's budget'.*

Although this was identified by the Specialist as an important area for development (Strategic evaluation), return on investment outlined by senior management, managers and staff included:

- Enhanced empowerment and trust
- Staff confidence and deeper learning – autonomous thinking
- Increased knowledge
- High brand reputation of Alliance Learning
- Retention of staff, leading to continuity of customer relationships – good feedback
- Career development
- Growth of staff within and across roles
- High staff morale
- Promotions
- Awards won for the business and management
- High quality skilled people
- Good loyalty to Alliance Learning

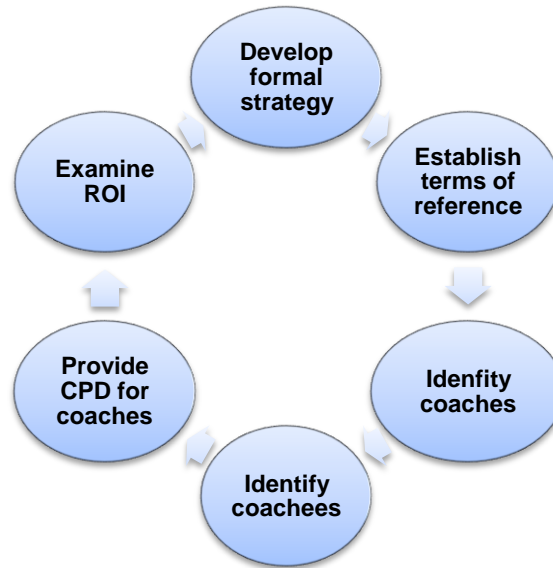
Senior management at the Alliance Learning should consider how fully engaged managers and people were in terms of examining the full impact of learning & development and as a result, then being able to provide information to senior management which would assist with their strategic evaluation as to return on investment.



By involving more people in the assessment as the impact of learning & development process, then senior management at the Alliance Learning should have more opportunities to complete an overarching evaluation in order to determine the true return on investment from their significant investment in staff development.

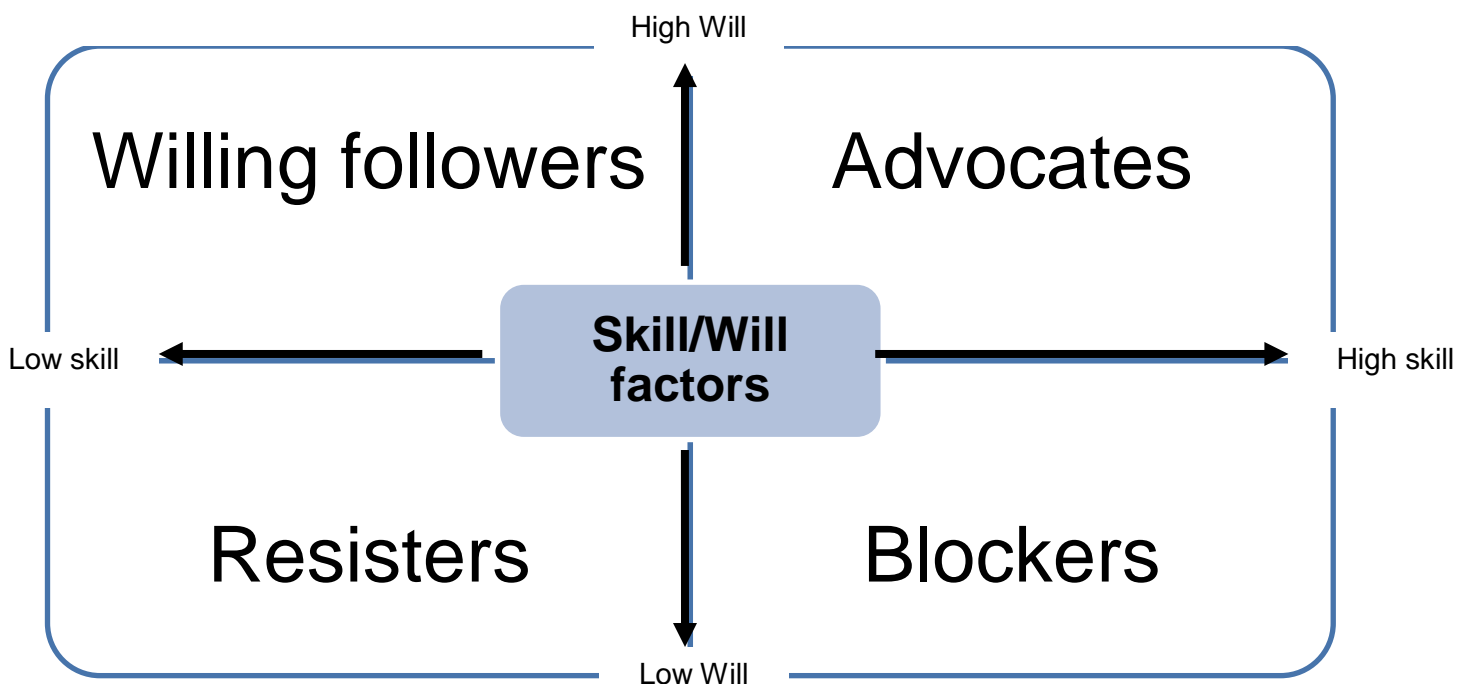
This valuable information which had been generated from a strategic review could be further used to inform future strategy for the Alliance Learning, resulting in the organisation's ability to respond to change and continue to build capability & capacity of its workforce.

There was good evidence of coaching regularly taking place in the workplace and there was a desire that all people within the Alliance Learning should benefit from this type of support. However, senior management should consider developing a formal strategy in this area.



Expanding & expounding on the role of the coach (and mentor relationship) had certainly assisted senior management at Alliance Learning in relation to the overall perception of coaching and also to allowed for all people to further comprehend that this type of intercession represented a significant investment in them. A constant review of this approach would pay dividends in terms of reflection, amendments and implementing improvements where needed.

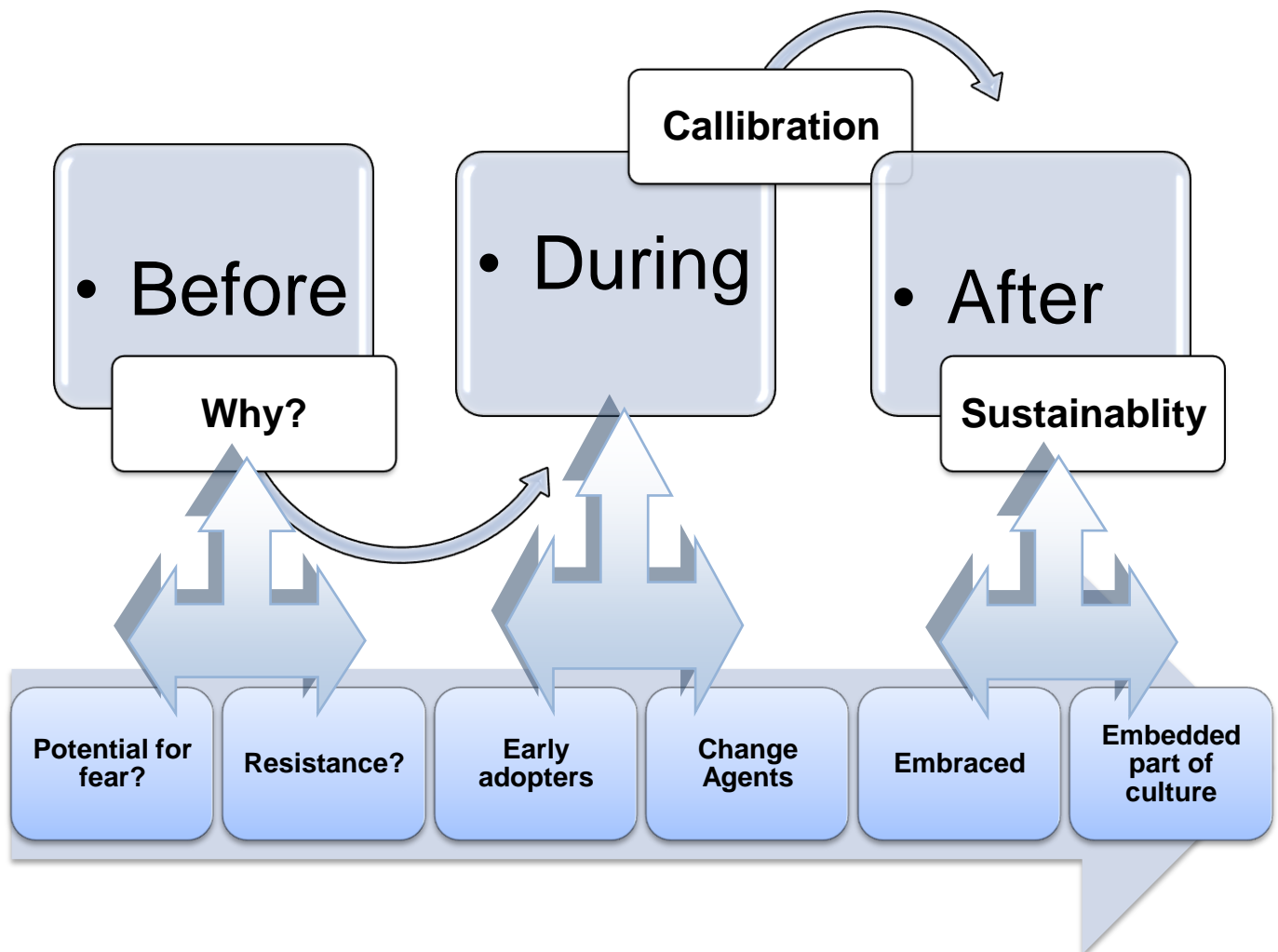
With regard to taking the organisation forward and managing change, senior management must be cognisant of the need to continue to ensure that everyone at Alliance Learning remained focussed on the reasons for change and were then positively involved in helping to implement any changes. (i.e. High Will- High Skill as illustrated in the model below by Stephen Hopkins).



By ensuring that all people were on board with change, senior management at Alliance Learning were more likely to achieve excellent team synergy & symbiotic focus in line with a coterminous approach being achieved within the organisation.

There was no doubt that Alliance Learning was a responsive, agile and evolving business and senior management had a cogent desire to meet any changes in the future head on. However senior management at the organisation should be cognisant of the following questions in order to maintain momentum, whilst ensuring that people remained highly motivated during any future transition.

- Was the pace of change always commensurate with peoples' ability to fully receive and act upon new information?
- What impact do the changes have on overall morale with teams and the business?
- Were all managers always providing sufficient support for teams involved in change?
- Does the approach to work-life balance consistently assist when supporting change and new ways of working?
- How can we make sure that we 'tease out' issues at the 'pinch point' rather than the 'crunch point'?
- How does the pace of change fit with Alliance Learning core ethos?
- Was sufficient information being provided to staff in terms of the rationale for change?
- How can we continue to update staff on progress and 'quick wins' in order to keep them fully engaged?
- Were managers at different levels always provided with the tools required to lead change?



APPENDIX

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE FEEDBACK MATRIX

<u>Investors in People Indicators</u>										
<u>ER</u>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	✓	✓	✓	D	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	✓	✓	✓	D	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	N/A	✓	✓	D	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	✓	✓	✓	D	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	D
5	N/A	✓	✓	D	D	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	✓	✓		D	✓		✓	✓	✓	D
7	D	✓	✓	D	✓			D	D	D
8	✓	✓	D	✓	D		✓	✓	D	
9	✓	✓	✓	D	D	✓	✓	✓	D	D
10	✓	✓	✓	D	✓	✓	✓	✓	D	D
11	D	✓		D	✓	✓	✓	✓	D	D
12	✓	✓	✓	D	D		✓		D	D
13	D	✓	D	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
14	✓	✓			✓	N/A	✓	✓	D	✓
15	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
16	✓	✓	D		D	✓	✓	D		
17	D	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		
18	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		
19	D				D	✓	✓			
20	✓		✓		✓			D		
21	✓		D		✓					
22	✓				✓					
23	D		✓		✓					
24	D		D		✓					
25	✓		✓		D					
26			✓							
27										
28			✓							
29			D							

Not all areas assessed
 ✓ = Met
 D = Development area - met
 N/A = Not applicable but counts for scoring purposes

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (To be discussed further with client)

Area (What)	Suggested Action (How)	By (When)	Specialist or client (Who)	Potential benefits for organisation (Why)	Moving Alliance Learning forward
Development of 'critical friend' approach	Consider the comments made in the report and examine potential benefits of developing this kind of relationship.	TBC	SMT or IDG Specialist – Mick Lynch	Adds additional support mechanism for managers	Ongoing support for reflection on the way forward
Focussed Management Development	Consider adopting a more focussed approach to supporting Management Development as a result of 1-1 reviews or any 360 degree feedback.	TBC	As above	More cost effective development of managers	Effective talent management
Action research for managers and talent management	Build upon the investment in management development and enhance the learning with post development action research.	TBC	As above	Senior managers & managers can identify ROI fairly quickly	Assists with innovation and application of new ideas into the workplace
Post development goals	Ensure that post development goals were set after development activities had taken place.	TBC	As above	Sets clear expectations in terms of early application	ROI established sooner
Experiential learning in teams – Team SOAR	Examine whether there is enough use of experiential learning and structured de-briefs at team meetings or events.	TBC	As above	Structured team de-briefs	Innovation, learning and forward thinking
Return on investment (includes SROI)	Develop strategic overarching approach to measuring return on investment. Examine how this assists to build capacity and inform future strategy.	TBC	As above	Establishes a tangible R.O.I	Helps to drive future strategy and agility of the business
Bright ideas scheme	Please consider implementing this process across the company	TBC	As above	Builds upon effective working practices	Enhanced staff engagement
Cross functional knowledge linked to selling the business	Please consider widening the internal knowledge in terms of people's ability to cross sell	TBC	As above	Helps to promote the business	Unified approach and assists marketing
Health & Well-being strategy	Consider formalising a strategy in this area	TBC	As above	Builds on effective people management	Benchmarking opportunity

Next review	Consider the next review in terms of the requirements of version 6 IIP standard.	TBC	As above	Provides added stretch	Strong brand alignment
Mandatory 18 month visit	<p>Consider how to use this meeting and how it could assist with continuous improvement</p> <p>The Specialist would be interested in examining the progress of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of CIP actions • Changes to the revised standard (Please visit website and attend awareness raising events for further details) 	Oct 2017	IDG contact Specialist Mick Lynch	Mandatory to maintain Standard	Assists the organisation with consultancy advice linked to transformation of the organisation in line with effective people management practices
Consultancy support	<p>In order to support your continuous development arising from this report we have a number of flexible options including one to one support with your action plan, consultancy that would help in terms of further advice plus workshops, training or on line tools and tutorials. Please let me know if you want me to arrange any of these to support you on your journey when working towards world class practices</p>				

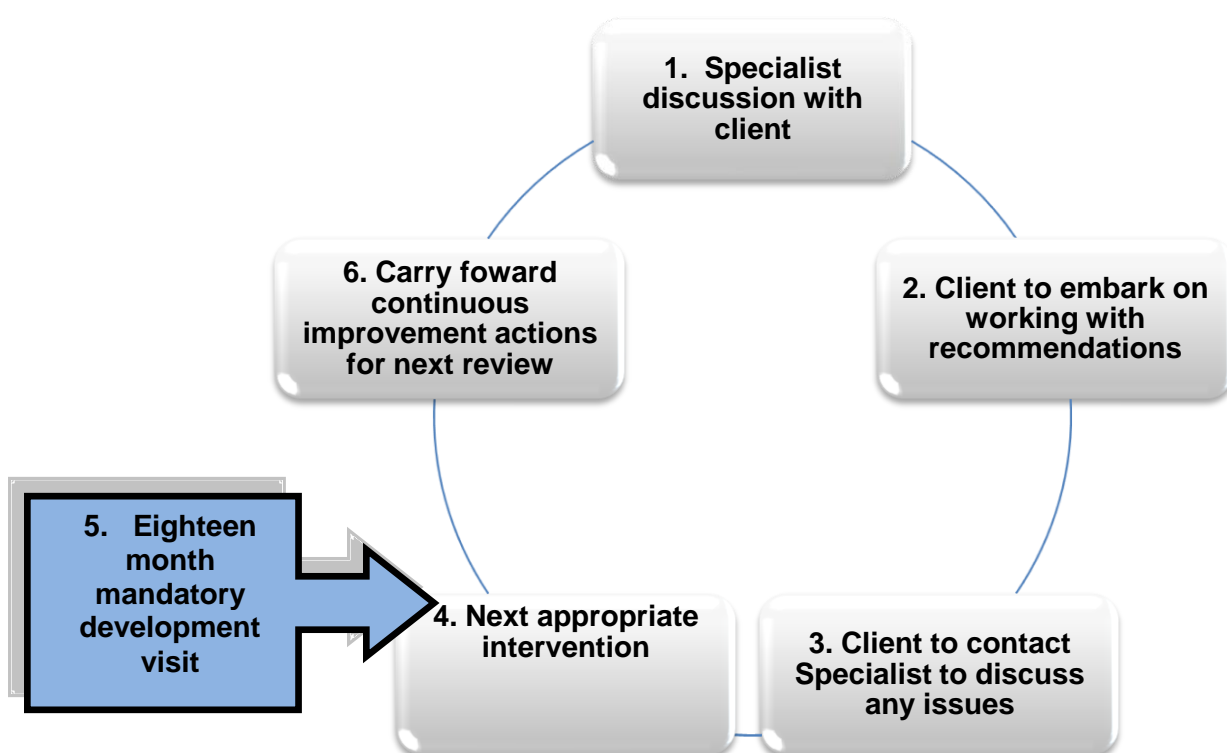
Conclusion

This was a very good accreditation visit for Alliance Learning (30 areas of strengths and IIP Gold accreditation achieved). The Specialist would like to thank all the people involved in the visit for their participation and input. The Specialist would also like to thank the management at Alliance Learning for their warm welcome and hospitality offered during the visit.

Senior management at the organisation should endeavour to build on the findings and consider the several options (outlined on page 36 of this report) for their next Specialist intervention.

The Specialist has made arrangements for a follow up contact call with the client, which will take place once they have digested the findings of the report. This discussion will be to discuss the overall findings and specific details within the report in order to move forward with its recommendations.

Continuous improvement & Way forward



Michael Lynch – Investors in People Specialist

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Options for your 18 month Specialist Development Visit

As a result of the need to have a mandatory 18 month development visit by your Investors in People Specialist, I would like you to consider when and what this intervention would consist of. I have made a list of the following options for your consideration

Type of intervention	Details	Outcome
Intermediate review	This could involve a review of your continuous improvement plan or development since the assessment.	Feedback on progress and development of further continuous improvement plan
Coaching intervention	Senior management, manager or staff 1-1 coaching session	Bespoke development for individual member of staff and action plan developed
Workshop	Specific sessions on: Leadership & management Coaching Skills Diversity Awareness Presentation & facilitation skills Planning of training/TNA's Customer service Team development Appraisal/Performance management skills	Specific learning outcomes agreed and met
Advice & guidance	Advice on varying topics such as: Business planning L & D planning Return on investment (L & D) Customer Service Excellence High performance working – in conjunction with specialist from IDG	Specific advice on business issues provided Organisational needs analysis completed (if needed)
Facilitation	Facilitation of a meeting, focus group or problem solving forum.	Meeting consensus, establishing protocols or establishing way forward
Development and design	Specific design of: TNA Business plans KPI's L & D plans Performance review documentation Evaluation strategies	Customised documentation developed which is appropriate to the needs of your organisation
Assessment review	18 month interim assessment as a result of changes, growth or other issues which need to be analysed or reviewed	Feedback on key issues or developments – CSE, ISO or other options
Version 6	Consider using visit to 'map' position against new IIP Standard and attend an awareness workshop	Working with the revised Standard

Your IIP Specialist will be in touch 3 months before the proposed visit and establish your needs from the options indicated above. Please feel free to contact your IIP Specialist at any time for ongoing advice & guidance. Abbreviations shown
TNA = Training needs analysis. ONA = Organisational needs analysis. L & D = Learning & Development
KPI = Key performance indicators. IIP = Investors in People. CSE = Customer Service Excellence

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